



ΠΡΟΣΟΠΟΙΙΑ .
OR,
**MOTHER HUB-
BERDS TALE.**

By *Edm. Sp.*

Dedicated to the right Honourable, the Lady
Compton and Mountegle.



LONDON,
Printed by *H. L.* and are sold by *G. Latham.*



PROFOTOIA
OR
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Dedicated to the right honorable the Lady
(Compton and M. Countess)



LONDON
Printed by W. A. and J. B. O. E. 1711



TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE,
the Lady *Compton* and *Mountegle*.



MOST faire and vertuous Lady; hauing sought opportunitie by some good meanes to make knowne to your Ladiship, the humble affection and faithfull dutie, which I haue alwaies professed, and am bound to beare to that House, from whence ye spring, I haue at length found occasion to remember the same, by making a simple present to you of these my idle labours; which hauing long sithens composed in the raw conceit of my youth, I lately among other papers lighted vpon, and was by others, which liked the same, moued to set them forth. Simple is the deuice, and the composition meane, yet carrieth some delight, euen the rather, because of the simplicitie and meannesse thus personated. The same I beseech your Ladiship take in good part, as a pledge of that profession which I haue made to you; and keepe with you, vntill with some other more worthy labour, I doe redeeme it out of your hands, and discharge my vtmost duetic. Till then, wishing your Ladiship all increase of honour and happinesse, I humbly take leaue.

Your La. euer

humbly;

Ed. Sp.

A 2





TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE
The Lady of the Manor and the County

My Lady, I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 10th inst. in relation to the matter of the petition of the said John Doe, and in reply to inform you that the same has been forwarded to the proper authorities for their consideration. I am, my Lady, very respectfully,
Your obedient servant,
John Doe



Yours faithfully,
John Doe

Yours faithfully,
John Doe

Yours faithfully,
John Doe

Yours faithfully,
John Doe



PROSOPOPOIA:

OR

Mother Hubberds Tale.

IT was the month, in which the righteous Maide,
That for disdain of sinfull worlds vpbraide,
Fled back to heauen, whence she was first conceiued,
Into her silver tower the Sunne receiued;
And the hot Syrian dog on him awayting,
After the chased Lions cruell bayting,
Corrupted had th'ayre with his noysome breath,
And pour'd on th'earth plague, pestilence, and death.
Amongst the rest, a wicked maladie
Raign'd amongst men, that many did to die,
Depriu'd of sense and ordinary reason;
That it to Leaches seemed strange and season.
My fortune was amongst many other moe,
To be partaker of their common woe;
And my weak body set on fire with griefe,
Was robd of rest, and naturall reliefe.
In this ill plight, there came to visite mee
Some friends, who sorry my sad case to see,
Began to comfort me in chearefull wise,
And meanes of glad some solace to deuise.
But seeing kindly sleepe refuse to doe
His office, and my feeble eyes forgoe,
They sought my troubled sense how to deceaue
With talke, that might vnquiet fancies reau;
And sitting all on seats about me round,
With pleasant tales (fit for that idle sound)
They cast in course to waste the wearie howres:
Some tolde of Ladies, and their Paramours;
Some of braue Knights, and their renowned Squires;
Some of the Faeries, and their strange attires;
And some of Giants, hard to be belieued,
That the delight thereof me much reueied.
Amongst the rest, a good old woman was,
Hight Mother Hubberd, who did far surpass
The rest in honest mirth, that seem'd her well:
She when her turne was come her tale to tell,
Told of a strange adventure, that betided
Betwixt the Foxe and th'Ape by him misguid;
The which for that my sense it greatly pleased,
All were my spirit headie and decaied,
He write in termes, as thoe the same did say,
So well as I her words remember may.
No Muses ayde me needs heere to call;
Base is the style, and matter meane withall.
¶ Whylome (said she) before the world was ciuill,
The Foxe and th'Ape disliking of their euill
And hard estate, determined to seeke
Their fortunes farre abroad, lyke with lyke:
For both were crafty and vnhappy witted;
Two fellows might no where be better fitted.

The Foxe, that first this cause of griefe did finde,
Can first thus plain his case with words vnde-
Neighbour Ape, and my Gossip eke beside
(Both two sure hands in friendship to be side)
To whom may I more trustfully complaine
The euill plight, that doth me sore constraime,
And hope thereof to finde due remedy?
Heare then my paine and inward agonie.
Thus many yeeres I now haue spent and worne,
In meane regard, and basest fortunes scorne,
Dooing my Country seruice as I might,
No lesse I dare say then the proudest wight;
And still I hoped to be vp advanced,
For my good parts; but still it hath mischaunced.
Now therefore that no longer hope I see,
But froward fortune still to follow me,
And losels lifted high, where I did looke,
I meane to turne the next lease of the booke:
Yet ere that any way I doe betake,
I meane my Gossip priuy first to make.

Ah! my deare Gossip (answer'd then the Ape)
Deepely doe your sad words my wits ashape,
Both for because your griefe doth great appeare,
And eke because my selfe am touched neare:
For I likewise haue wasted much good time,
Still wayting to preferment vp to clime,
Whilst others alwaies haue before me stept,
And from my beard the far away haue swept,
That now vnto despair I gin to growe,
And meane for better winde about to throwe.
Therefore to me, my trustie friend, atead
Thy counsell: Two is better then one head.

Certes (said he) I meane me to disguise
In some strange habit, after vncouth wize,
Or like a Pilgrim, or a Lymiter,
Or like a Gipfen, or a luggeler,
And so to wander to the worldes end,
To seeke my fortune, where I may it mend:
For worse then that I haue I cannot meet,
Wide is the world I wote, and euery street
Is full of fortunes, and adventures strange,
Continually subiect vnto change.
Say my faire brother now, if this deuice
Doe like you, or may you to like entice.

Surely (said th'Ape) it likes me wondrous well,
And would ye not poore fellowship expell,
My selfe would offer your accompany
In this adventures chauncetfull iecopardie,
For to wexe olde at home in idleness,
Is disaduentrous, and quite fortunelesse:

Abroad where change is good may gotten be.

The Foxe was glad, and quickly did agree:
So both resolvd the morrow next ensuing,
So soone as day appear'd to peoples viewing,
On their intended journey to proceed;
And over night, what-so thereto did need,
Each did prepare in readinesse to bee.
The morrow next, so soone as one might see
Light out of heauens windowes forth to looke,
Both their habiliments vnto them tooke,
And put themselues (a Gods name) on their way:
When-as the Ape beginning well to wey
This hard adventure, thus began t'advise;

Now read Sir Reynold, as ye be right wise,
What course yee weene is best for vs to take,
That for our selues we may a liuing make.
Whether shall we professe some trade or skill?
Or shall we vary our deuce at will,
Euen as new occasion appears?
Or shall we tie our selues for certaine yeeres,
To any seruice, or to any place?
For it behoues ere that into the race
We enter, to resolue first hereupon.

Now surely brother (said the Foxe anon)
Ye haue this matter motioned in season:
For euery thing that is begun with reason
Will come by ready meanes vnto his end:
But things miscounsell'd must needs miswend.
Thus therefore I advise vpon the case,
That not to any certaine trade or place,
Nor any man we should our selues apply;
For, why should he that is at liberty
Make himselfe bond? Sith then we are free borne,
Let vs all seruile base subiection scorne;
And as we be sonnes of the world so wide,
Let vs our fathers heritage diuide,
And challenge to our selues our portions dew
Of all the patrimony, which a few
Now hold in hugger mugger in their hand.
And all the rest doe rob of good and land.
For now a few haue all, and all haue nough,
Yet all be brethren ylike dearly bought:
There is no right in this partition,
Ne was it so by institution
Ordained first, ne by the law of Nature,
But that the gaue like blessing to each creature
As well of worldly liuelode as of life,
That there might be no difference nor strife,
Nor ought call'd mine or thine: thrice happy then
Was the condition of mortall men.
That was the golden age of Saturne old,
But this might better be the world of gold:
For without gold now nothing will be got.
Therefore (if please you) this shall be our plot,
We will not be of any occupation.
Let such vile vassalls borne to base vocation
Drudge in the world, and for their liuing droyle
Which haue no wit to liue withouten toyle,
But we will walke about the world at pleasure
Like two free men, and make our ease a treasure,

Free men some beggers call; but they be free,
And they which call them so more beggers bee:
For they doe swinke and sweat to feed the other,
Who, liues like Lords of that which they doe gather,
And yet doe neuer thanke them for the same,
But as their due by nature do it claime.
Such will we fashion both our selues to be,
Lords of the world, and so will wander free
Where so vs listeth, vncontroul'd of any:
Hard is our hap, if we (amongst so many)
Light not on some that may our state amend;
Seldome but some good commeth ere the end.

Well seem'd the Ape to like this ordinance:
Yet well considering of the circumstance,
As pausing in great doubt a while he staid,
And afterwards with graue aduise ment said;
I cannot my lief brother like but well
The purpose of the complot which ye tell:
For well I wot (compar'd to all the rest
Of each degree) that Beggers life is best:
And they that thinke themselues the best of all,
Of times to begging are content to fall.
But this I wote withall, that we shall runne
Into great danger, like to be vndone,
Wildly to wander thus in the worlds eye,
Without Pasport or good warrantie,
For feare least we like rogues should be reputed,
And for care-marked beasts abroad be bruted:
Therefore I read, that we our counsells call,
How to preuent this mischief ere it fall,
And how we may with most securitie,
Beg amongst those that beggers doe deffie.

Right well, deare Gossip, ye aduised haue,
(Said then the Foxe) but I this doubt will saue;
For ere we farther passe, I will deuize
A Pasport for vs both in fittest wize,
And by the name of Souldier vs protect;
That now is thought a ciuill begging sect.
Be you the Souldier, for you likeliest are
For manly semblance, and (small skill in warre:
I will but waite on you, and as occasion
Falls out, my selfe fit for the same will fashion.

The Pasport endcd, both they forward went,
The Ape clad Souldier-like, fit for th'intent,
In a blew iacket with a crosse of red,
And many slits, as if that he had shed
Much blood through many wounds therein receiued,
Which had the vse of his right arme bereaued;
Vpon his head an old Scotch cap he wore,
With a plume feather all to peeces tore:
His breeches were made after the new cut,
A Portugese, loose like an empty gut;
And his hose broken high about the heeling,
And his shoes beaten out with traueling.
But neither sword nor dagger he did beare,
Seemes that no foes reuengement he did feare;
In stead of them a handsome bat he held,
On which he leane'd, as one farre in eld.
Shame light on him, that through so false illusion,
Doth turne the name of Souldiers to abusion,

And

And that which is the noblest myserie,
Brings to reproach and common infamie.

Long they thus trauailed, yet neuer met
Adventures, which might them a working set;
Yet many wayes they sought, and many tryed;
Yet for their purposes none fit espied.
At last, they chaunc't to meete vpon the way,
A simple husbandman in garments gray.
Yet though his vesture were but meane and bace,
A good yeoman he was of honest place.
And more for thrift did care then for gay clothing:
Gay without good, is good harts greatest loathing:
The Foxe him spying, bad the Ape him dight
To play his part, for loe he was in sight
That (if he heerr'd not) should them entertaine,
And yeeld them timely profit for their paine.
Eftsoones the Ape himselfe gan to vpreare,
And on his shoulders high his bar to beare,
As if good seruice he were fit to doe;
But little thrift for him he did it to:
And stoutly forward he his steps did straine,
That like a handsome swaine it him became.
When-as they night approached, that good man
Seeing them wandring loosely, first began
T'enquire of custome, what and whence they were?
To whom the Ape, 'I am a souldiere,
That late in warres haue spent my dearest bloud,
And in long seruice lost both limbs and good,
And now constrain'd that trade to ouer-giue,
I driuen am to seeke some meanes to liue:
Which might it you in pittie please t'afford,
I would be ready both in deed and word,
To doe you faithfull seruice all my daies.
This yron world (that same he weeping saies)
Brings downe the stoutest harts to lowest state:
For misery doth brauest mindes abate,
And makes them seeke for that they wont to scorne,
Of fortune and of hope at once forlorne.

The honest man, that heard him thus complaine,
Was grieved, as he had felt part of his paine;
And well dispos'd him some reliefe to shewe,
Ask if in husbandry he ought did knowe,
To plough, to plant, to reape, to rake, to sowe,
To hedge, to ditch, to thresh, to tharch, to mowe;
Or to what labour else he was prepar'd?
For husbands life is labourous and hard.

When-as the Ape him heard so much to talke
Of labour, that did from his liking balke,
He would haue slip't the collar handsomely
And to him said; Good Sir, full glad am I,
To take what paines may any liuing wight:
But my late maimed limbs lack wonted might
To doe their kindly seruices, as needeth:
Scarce this right hand the mouth with diet feedeth,
So that it may no painfull worke endure,
Ne to strong labour can it selfe enure.
But if that any other place you haue,
Which asks small paines, but thriftinesse to saue,
Or care to ouer-looke, or trust to gather,
Ye may me trust as your owne ghostly father,

With that the husbandman gan him auize,
That it for him was fittest exercise
Cattell to keepe, or ground to ouer-see;
And asked him if he could willing be
To keepe his sheepe, or to attend his swine,
Or watch his mares, or take his charge of kine?
Gladly (said he) what euer such like paine
Ye put on me, I will the same sustaine:
But gladdest I of your fleecie sheepe
(Might it you please) would take on me the keepe.
For ere that vnto armes I me betooke,
Vnto my Fathers sheepe I vs'd to looke,
That yet the skill thereof I haue not lost:
There-to right well this Curdogg by my coste
(Meaning the Foxe) will serue, my sheepe to gather,
And driue to follow after their Belwether.

The Husbandman was meanelly well content,
Triall to make of his endeourment,
And home him leading, lent to him the charge
Of all his flock, with liberty full large,
Giuing account of th'annuall increase.

Both of their Lambs, and of their woolly fleec.
Thus is this Ape become a shepherd swaine,
And the false Foxe, his dog (God giue them paine)
For, ere the yeere haue halfe his course out-run,
And doe returne from whence it first begun,
They shall him make an ill account of thrift.

Now, when-as Time flying with wings swift,
Expired had the terme, that these two iavels
Should render vp a reckning of their trauels
Vnto their master, which it of them sought,
Exceedingly they troubled were in thought,
Ne wist what answer vnto him to frame,
Ne how to scape great punishment, or shame,
For their false treason and vile theeuery.
For; not a lambe of all their flocks supply
Had they to shew: but euer as they bred,
They slew them, and vpon their fleshes fed:
For that disguised dog lov'd blood to spill,
And drew the wicked shepherd to his will,
So twixt them both they not a lamblin left;
And when lambes say'd, the old sheepes liues they rest;
That how t'acquite themselves vnto their Lord,
They were in doubt, and flatly set aboard.
The Foxe then counsell'd th'Ape, for to require
Respite till morrow, t'answer his desire:
For times delay new hope of helpe still breeds,
The Goodman granted, doubting nought their deeds,
And bad next day that all should ready be:
But they more subtil meaning had then he:
For the next morrowes meed they closely ment,
For feare of afterclaps for to prevent.
And that same euening, when all throwded were
In carelesse sleepe, they without care or feare,
Cruelly fell vpon their flock in folde,
And of them slew at pleasure what they wolde:
Of which, when as they feasted had their fill,
For a full complement of all their ill,
They stole away, and tooke their hastie flight,
Carried in clowdes of all-concealing night.

So was the husbandman left to his losse,
 And they vnto their fortunes change to tosse.
 After which sort they wandered long while,
 Abusing many through their cloked guile;
 That at the last they gan to be desiered
 Of euery one, and all their sleights epied.
 So as their begging now them failed quite;
 For none would giue, but all men would them wyte:
 Yet would they take no paines to get their liuing,
 But seeke some other way to gaine by giuing,
 Much like to begging, but much better named;
 For many beg, which are thereof ashamed.
 And now the Foxe had gotten him a gowne,
 And th'Aape a cassocke side-long hanging downe;
 For they their occupation meant to change,
 And now in other state abroad to range:
 For, since their souldiers Pas no better spedd,
 They forg'd another, as for Clerks, booke-redd.
 Who passing forth, as their adventures fell,
 Through many haps, which needs not here to tell;
 At length, chanc't with a formall Priest to meete,
 Whom they in ciuill manner first did greet,
 And after askt an almes for Gods deare loue.
 The man straight-way his choler vp did moue.
 And with reproachfull tearmes gan them reuile,
 For following that trade so base and vile;
 And askt what Licence, or what Pas they had.
 Ah (said the Ape, as sighing wondrous sad)
 It's an hard case, when men of good deseruing
 Must either driuen be perforce to steruing,
 Or asked for their Pas by euery squib,
 That list at will them to reuile or inib:
 And yet (God wote) small oddes I often see
 Twixt them that aske, and them that asked bee.
 Natherlesse, because you shall not vs misdeeme,
 But that we are as honest as we seeme,
 Yee shall our Paspoort at your pleasure see,
 And then ye will (I hope) well moued bee.
 Which when the Priest beheld, he view'd it neere,
 As if therein some Text he studying were;
 But little else (God wote) could thereof skill:
 For, read he could not Euidence, nor Will,
 Ne tell a written word, ne write a letter,
 Ne make one tittle worse, ne make one better:
 Of such deepe learning little had he neede,
 Ne yet of Latine, ne of Greeke, that breede
 Doubts mongst Diuines, and difference of Texts,
 From whence arise diuersitie of Sects,
 And hatefull heresies of God abhor'd:
 But this good Sir did follow the plaine Word,
 Ne medled with their controuersies vaine,
 All his care was, his seruice well to saine,
 And to read Homelies on holidayes,
 When that was done, he might attend his playes;
 An easie life, and fit high God to please.
 He, hauing over-lookt their Pas at easie,
 Gan at the length them to rebuke againe,
 That no good trade of life did entertaine,
 But lost their time in wandring loose abroad,
 Seeing the world, in which they bootlesse boad,

Had waies enow for all therein to liue;
 Such grace did God vnto his creatures giue.

Said then the Fox; Who hath the world not tride,
 From the right way full eath may wander wide.
 We are but Nouices, new come abroad,
 We haue not yet the tract of any troad,
 Nor on vs taken any state of life,
 But ready are of any to make prieste. (proued,
 Therefore, might please you, which the world haue
 Vs to aduise, which forth but lately moued,
 Of some good course, that we might vndertake:
 Ye shall for euer vs your bondmen make.

The Priest gan weise halfe proud to be so praide,
 And thereby willing to affoord them ayde;
 It seemes (said he) right well that ye be Clerks,
 Both by your witty words, and by your werkes.
 Is not that name enough to make a liuing
 To him that hath a whit of Natures giuing?
 How many honest men see yee arise
 Daily thereby, and growe to goodly prize?
 To Deanes, to Archdeacons, to Commisaries,
 To Lords, to Principalls, to Prebendaries;
 All iolly Prelates, worthy rule to beare,
 Who euer them enue: yet spight bites neare.
 Why should ye doubt them, but that ye likewise
 Might vnto some of those in time arise?
 In the meane time to liue in good estate,
 Louing that loue, and hating those that hate;
 Beeing some honest Curate, or some Vicker,
 Content with little in condition sicker.

Ah! but (saith th'Ape) the charge is wondrous great,
 To feede mens soules, and hath an heauy threat.
 To feed mens soules (quoth he) is not in man:
 For, they must feed themselves, doe what we can.
 We are but charg'd to lay the meat before:
 Eate they that list, we need to doe no more.
 But God it is that feeds them with his grace,
 The bread of life pour'd downe from heavenly place.
 Therefore said he, that with the budding rod
 Did rule the Iewes, *All shall be taught of God.*
 That same hath Iesus Christ now to him taught,
 By whom the flocks is rightly fed and taught:
 He is the Shepheard, and the Priest is he;
 We but his Shepheard swaines ordain'd to bee.
 Therefore heere-with doe not your selfe dismay,
 Ne is the paines so great, but beare ye may;
 For not so great as it was wont of yore,
 It's now adayes, ne halfe so straight and sore.
 They whylome vsed duly euery day
 Their seruice and their holy things to say,
 At noone and euen, besides their Antheims sweet,
 Their peny Masses, and their Compynes meet,
 Their Diriges, their Trentals, and their Thrifts,
 Their memories, their singings, and their gifts.
 Now all these needlesse werkes, are laid away;
 Now once a weeke vpon the Sabbath day,
 It is enough to doe our small deuotion,
 And then to follow any merry motion.
 Ne are we tyde to fast, but when we list,
 Ne to weare garments base of wollen twist,

But with the finest silks vs to aray,
That before God we may appeare more gay,
Resembling *Aarons* glory in his place:
For farre vnfit it is, that persons bace
Should with vile cloathes approach Gods maiestie,
Whom no vncleannes may approchen nie:
Or that all men which any master serue,
Good garments for their seruice should deserue;
But he that serues the Lord of hostis most high,
And that in highest place, t'approach him nigh,
And all the peoples prayers to present
Before his throne, as on ambassage sent
Both to and fro, should not deserue to weare
A garment better, than of wooll or haire.
Beside, we may haue lying by our sides
Our louely Lasses, or bright shining Brides:
We be not tyde to wilfull chastitie,
But haue the Gospell of free libertie.

By that he ended had his ghastly sermon,
The Foxe was well induc'd to be a Parson;
And of the Priestt estoones gan to enquire,
How to a Benefice he might aspire.
Marie there (said the Priest) is art indeede,
Much good deepe learning one therout may reede,
For, that the ground-woke is, and end of all,
How to obtaine a Beneficall.
First therefore, when ye haue in handsome wise
Your selues attired, as you can deuise,
Then to some Noble man your selfe apply,
Or other great one in the worldes eye,
That hath a zealous disposition
To God, and so to his religion:
There must thou fashion eke a godly zeale,
Such as no capers may contrayre reueale:
For, each thing fained ought more warie be.
There must thou walke in sober grauitie,
And seeme as Saint-like as Saint *Radegund*:
Fast much, pray oft, looke lowly on the ground,
And vnto euery one doe curtesie meeke:
These lookes (nought saying) doe a Benefice seeke,
And be thou sure one not to lack ere long.
But if thee list vnto the Court to throng,
And there to hunt after the hoped pray,
Then must thou thee dispose another way:
For there thou needs must learne, to laugh, to lie,
To face, to forge, to scoffe, to company,
To crouche, to please, to be a beetle stock
Of thy great Masters will, to scorne, or mock:
So maist thou chance mock out a benefice,
Vnlesse thou canst one coniuere by deuice,
Or cast a figure for a Bishoprick:
And if one could, it were but a schoole-trick.
These be the waies, by which without reward
Liuing in Court be gotten, though full hard.
For nothing there is done without a fee:
The Courtier needs must recompenced bee
With a Beneuolence, or haue in gage
The *Primicias* of your Parsonage:
Scarce can a Bishoprick forpas them by,
But that it must be gelt in priuie.

Doe not thou therefore seeke a liuing there,
But of more priuate persons seeke elwhere,
Where-as thou maist compound a better pennie,
Ne let thy learning question'd be of any.
For some good Gentleman that hath the right
Vnto his Church for to present a wight,
Will cope with thee in reasonable wise;
That if the liuing ycerely doe arise
To fortie pound, that then his yongest sonne
Shall twenty haue, and twenty thou hast wonne:
Thou hast it wonne, for it is of franke gift,
And he will care for all the rest to shift;
Both, that the Bishop may admit of thee,
And that therein thou maist maintaine d bee.
This is the way for one that is vnlearn'd
Liuing to get, and not to be discern'd.
But they that are great Clerks, haue neerer wayes,
For learning sake to liuing them to raise:
Yet many eke of them (God wote) are driuen,
T'accept a Benefice in peeces riuen.
How sai'st thou (friend) haue I not well discourst
Vpon this Common place (though plaine, not wourst)?
Better a short tale, then a bad long thriuing.
Needes any more to learne to get a liuing?

Now sure and by my hallidome (quoth he)
Yea great master are in your degree:
Great thanks, I yeeld you for your discipline,
And doe not doubt, but duly to encline
My wits thereto, as ye shall shortly heare.
The Priestt him with good speed, and well to fare.
So parted they, as eithers way them led.
But th'Ape and Foxe ere long so well them sped,
Through the Priestts wholsome counsell lately taught,
And through their owne faire handling wisely wrought,
That they a Benefice twixt them obtained;
And crafty Reynold was a Priestt ordained;
And th'Ape his Parish Clarke procur'd to bee.
Then made they reuell route and goodly glee.
But ere long time had passed, they so ill
Did order their affaires, that th'euill will
Of all their Parishners they had constrain'd;
Who to the Ordinarie of them complain'd,
How foully they their offices abus'd,
And them of crimes and heresies accus'd;
That Pursuants he often for them sent:
But they neglecting his commaundement
So long persisted obstinate and bold,
Till at the length he published to hold
A Visitation, and them cyted thither:
Then was high time their wits about to gather;
What did they then, but made a composition
With their next neighbour Priestt for light condition,
To whom their liuing they resigned quight
For a few pence, and ran away by night.
So passing through the Countrey in disguise,
They fled far off, where none might them surprize,
And after that long straid heere and there,
Through euery field and Forrest farre and neere;
Yet neuer found occasion for their tourne,
But almost steru'd, did much lament and mourne.

At last, they chaunc't to meet vpon the way
 The Mule, all deckt in goodly rich aray,
 With bells and bosses, that full lowdly rung,
 And costlly trappings, that to ground downe hung,
 Lowly they him saluted in meeke wise;
 But he through pride and fatnes gan despise
 Their meannesse; scarce vouchsafe them to requite.
 Whereat the Foxe deepe groning in his sprite,
 Said, Ah! fir Mule, now blessed be the day,
 That I see you so goodly and so gay
 In your attyres, and eke your silken hyde
 Fill'd with round flesh, that euery bone doth hide.
 Seemes that in fruitfull pastures you doe liue,
 Or Fortune doth you secret fauour giue.

Foolish Foxe (said the Mule) thy wretched need
 Praiseth the thing that doth thy sorrow breed.
 For well I weene, thou canst not but enuie
 My wealth, compar'd to thine owne misery,
 That art so leane and meagre waxen late,
 That scarce thy legs vphold thy feeble gate.

Ay me: said then the Foxe) whom euill hap
 Vnworthy in such wretchednes doth wrap;
 And make the scoime of other beasts to be:
 But read (saie Sir, of grace) from whence come yee?
 Or what of tydings you abroad doe heare?
 Newes may perhaps some good vnweeing beare.

From royall Court I lately came (said he)
 Where all the brauerie that eye may see,
 And all the happinesse that heart desire;
 Is to be found; he nothing can admire,
 That hath not seene that heauens portraiture:
 But tydings there is none I you assure,
 Saue that which common is, and knowne to all,
 That Courtiers as the tyde doe rise and fall.

But, tell vs (said the Ape) we doe you pray,
 Who now in Court doth beare the greatest sway.
 That if such fortune doe to vs befall,
 We may seeke fauour of the best of all.

Marie (said he) the highest now in grace,
 Be the wilde beasts, that swiftest are in chase;
 For in their speedie course and nimble flight
 The Lion now doth take the most delight:
 But chiefly, ioyes on foote them to behold,
 Enchaste with chaine and circulet of gold:
 So wilde a beast so tame ytraught to be,
 And buxome to his bands is ioy to see.
 So well his golden Circlet him becometh:
 But his late chaine his Liege vnmeet esteemeth;
 For so braue beasts he loueth best to see
 In the wilde Forrest raunging fresh and free.
 Therefore if fortune thee in Court to liue,
 In case thou euer there wilt hope to thriue,
 To some of these thou must thy selfe apply:
 Else, as a thistle-downe in th'ayre doth lie,
 So, vainely shalt thou to and fro be tost,
 And lose thy labour and thy fruitlesse cost.
 And yet full few that follow them I see,
 For vertues bare regard aduanced be,
 But either for some gainefull benefit,
 Or that they may for their owne turnes be fit.

Nath'lesse, perhaps, ye things may handle so,
 That ye may better thriue then thousands mo.

But (said the Ape) how shall we first come in,
 That after we may fauour seeke to win?

How else (said he) but with a good bold face,
 And with big words, and with a stately pace,
 That men may thinke of you in generall,
 That to be in you which is not at all:
 For, not by that which is, the world now deemeth
 (As it was wont) but by that same it seemeth.
 Ne doe I doubt but that ye well can fashion
 Your selues there-to, according to occasion:
 So fare you well, good Courtiers may ye be;
 So proudly neighing, from them parted he.

Then gan this craftie couple to deuize,
 How for the Court themselves they might agize:
 For thither they themselves meant to addresse,

In hope to finde their happier successe;
 So well they shifted, that the Ape anon

Himselfe had clothed like a Gentleman,
 And the slie Fox, as like to be his groom,

That to the Court in seemely sort they come,
 Where the fond Ape himselfe vprearing by

Vpon his tiptoes, stalketh stately by,
 As if he were some great *Magnifico*,

And boldly doth amongst the boldest go.

And his man Reynold with fine counterfeinaunce
 Supports his credite and his countenance.

Then gan the Courtiers gaze on euery side,
 And stare on him, with big looks bafen wide,

Wondring what mister might he was, and whence:
 For he was clad in strange accoustrements,

Fashion'd with quient deuises neuer seene
 In Court before, yet there all fashions beene:

Yet he them in new strangenesse did passe:
 But his behauiour altogether was

Alla Turchesca, much the more admyr'd,
 And his lookes lostie, as if he aspyr'd

To dignitie, and seign'd the lowe degree;
 That all which did such strangenesse in him see,

By secret meanes gan of his state enquire,
 And priuily his seruant thereto hire:

Who, throughly arm'd against such couerture,
 Reported vnto all, that he was sure

A noble Gentleman of high regard,
 Which, through the world had with long trauell far'd,

And seene the manners of all beasts on ground;
 Now heere arriu'd, to see if like he found.

Thus did the Ape at first him credit gaine,
 Which afterwards he wisely did maintaine

With gallant shoue, and daily more augment
 Through his fine feats and Courtly complement;

For he could play, and daunce, and vaute, and spring,
 And all that else pertaines to reuelling,

Onely through kindly aptnes of his ioynts.

Besides, he could doe many other poynts,
 The which in Court him serued to good stead:

For, he mongst Ladies could their fortunes read
 Out of their hands, and merie leasings tell,

And iuggle finely, that became him well:

But he so light was at legier-demaine,
That what he toucht, came not to light againe;
Yet would he laugh it out, and proudly looke,
And tell them, that they greatly him mistooke.
So would he scoffe them out with mockerie,
For he therein had great felicitie;
And with sharp quips ioy'd others to deface,
Thinking that their disgracing did him grace;
So whilst that other like vaine wits he pleased,
And made to laugh, his heart was greatly eased.
But the right gentle mind would bite his lip,
To heare the lauell (so good men to nip:
For though the vulgar yeeld an open eare,
And common Courtiers loie to gybe and floure
At euery thing, which they heare spoken ill,
And the best speeches with ill meaning spill;
Yet the braue Courtier, in whose beaustious thought
Regard of honour harbours more than ought,
Doth loath such base condition, to backbite
Anies good name for envie or despite:
He stands on tearmes of honourable mind,
Ne will be carried with the common wind
Of Courts inconstant mutabilitie;
Ne after euery tattling fable flie;
But heares, and sees the follies of the rest,
And thereof gathers for himselfe the best:
He will not creepe, nor crouch with fained face,
But walks vpright with comely stedfast pace,
And vnto all doth yeeld due curtesie;
But not with kisse hand belowe the knee,
As that faine Apish crue is wont to doe:
For he disdaines himselfe to embaise there-to.
He hates foule leasings, and vile flatterie,
Two fishy blots in noble Gentrie;
And lothefull idlenes he doth derest,
The canker-worme of euery gentle brest:
The which to banish with faire exercise
Of knightly feats, he daily doth deuise:
Now menaging the mouthes of stubborne feedes:
Now practising the prooue of warlike deedes,
Now his bright armes assaying, now his speare,
Now the nigh-aymed ring away to beare;
At other times he casts to fewe the chace
Of swift wilde beasts, or runne on foote a race,
To enlarge his breath (large breath in armes most needful)
Or else by wrestling to wax strong and heedfull,
Or his stiffe armes to stretch with Eughen bowe,
And manly legs still passing to and fro,
Without a gowned beast him fast beside;
A vaine ensample of the Persian pride,
Who after he had wonne the Assyrian foe,
Did euer after scorne on foote to goe.
Thus when this Courtly Gentleman with toyle
Himselfe hath wearied, he doth recoyle
Vnto his rest, and there with sweet delight
Of Musicks skill resuiues his toyled spright;
Or else with Loues, and Ladies gentle sports,
The ioy of youth, himselfe he recomforts:
Or lastly, when the body list to pause,
His minde vnto the Muses he with-drawes;

Sweet Lady Muses, Ladies of delight,
Delights of life, and ornaments of light:
With whom he close confers with wise discourse,
Of Natures workes, of heauens continuall course,
Of forraigne lands, of people different,
Of kingdoms change, of diuers government,
Of dreadfull battailes, of renowned Knights;
With which he kindleth his ambitious sprights
To like desire and praise of noble fame,
The onely vp-shot where-to he doth aime:
For all his mind on honour fixed is,
To which he leuels all his purposes,
And in his Princes seruice spends his daies,
Not so much for to gaine, or for to raise
Himselfe to high degree; as for his grace,
And in his liking to winne worthy place,
Through due deserts and comely carriage,
In what-so please employ his personage,
That may be matter meet to gaine him praise;
For he is fit to vse in all assayes,
Whether for Armes and warlike amenaunce,
Or else for wise and ciuill gouernaunce.
For he is practiz'd well in policie,
And there-to doth his courting most apply:
To learne the enterdeale of Princes strange,
To marke the intent of Counsell, and the change
Of States, and eke of priuate men some-while,
Supplanted by fine fallshood and faire guile;
Of all the which he gathereth what is fit,
To enrich the storehoue of his powerfull wit,
Which through wise speeches, and graue conference
He daily eekes, and brings to excellence.

Such is the rightfull Courtier in his kind;
But vnto such the Ape lent not his mind;
Such were for him no fit companions,
Such would defery his lewd condition:
But the young lustie gallants he did chosse
To follow, meet to whom he might disclose
His wilelesse pleasure, and ill-pleasing vaine:
A thousand wayes he them could entertaine,
With all the thriftlesse games that may be found,
With mumming and with masking all around,
With dice, with cards, with balliards far vnfit,
With shurtle cocks, mis-feming manly wit,
With courtizans, and costly riotize,
Whereof still somewhat to his share did rize:
Ne, them to pleasure, would he sometimes scorne
A Pandars coate (so basely was he borne):
There-to he could fine louing verses frame,
And play the Poet oft. But ah! for shame,
Let not sweet Poets praise, whose onely pride
Is vertue to aduance, and vice deride,
Be with the worke of losels wit defamed,
Ne let such verses Poetry be named:
Yet he the name on him would rashly take,
Maugre the sacred Muses, and it make
A seruant to the vile affection
Of such, as he depended most vpon,
And with the sugry sweet thereof allure
Chaste Ladies eares to fantasies impure,

To such delights the noble wits he led
Which him reliev'd and their vaine humors fed
With fruitlesse follies, and vnfound delights.
But if perhaps, into their noble sprights
Desire of honour, or braue thought of armes
Did euer creepe, then with his wicked charmes
And strong conceits he would it driue away,
Ne suffer it to houle there halfe a day.
And when so loue of letters did inspire
Their gentle wits, and kindly wise desire
That chiefly doth each noble mind adorne,
Then he would scoffe at learning, and eke scoorne
The Sectaries thereof, as people bace,
And simple men, which neuer came in place
Of worlds affaires, but in darke corners mewd,
Muttred of matters, as their bookes them shewd,
Ne other knowledge euer did attaine,
But with their gownes their grauitie maintaine
From them he would his impudent lowd speech
Against Gods holy Ministers oft reach,
And mock Diuines and their profession:
What else then did he by progression,
But mock high God himselfe, whom they professe?
But what car'd he for God or godlinesse?
All his care was himselfe how to aduance,
And to vphold his courtly countenance
By all the cunning meanes he could deuise;
Were it by honest waies, or otherwise,
He made small choise; yet sure his honestie
Got him small gaires, but shamelesse flattery,
And filly broage, and vnseemly shifts,
And borrow bafe, and some good Ladies gifts:
But the best helpe, which chiefly him sustain'd,
Was his man Reynolds purchase which he gain'd.
For he was schoold by kind in all the skill
Of close conuoyance, and each practise ill
Of coofnage and cleanly knauerie,
Which oft maintaynd his matters brauery.
Besides, he vs'd another slippery flight,
In taking on himselfe in common sight
False personages, for every sted,
With which he thus fands cleanly coofined:
Now like a Merchant, Merchants to deceaue,
With whom his credite he did often leaue
In gage, for his gay Masters hopelesse dett,
Now like a Lawyer, when he land would lett,
Or sell fee simple in his Masters name,
Which he had neuer, nor might like the same:
Then would he be a Broker, and draw in
Both wares and money, by exchange to win;
Then would he be a Farmer, and would sell
Bargaines of woods, which he did lately fell,
Or corne, or cattle, or such other wares;
There-by to coofin men not well aware;
Of all the which there came a fearelesse
To th'Ape, that he his countenance might be.
Besides all this, he vs'd oft to beguile
Poore futers, that in Court did haue some while;
For he would learne their busines secretly,
And then informe his Master hastily,

That he by meanes might cast them to preuent,
And beg the sute the which the other ment.
Or otherwise, false Reynold would abuse
The simple Suter, and with him to chuse
His Master, beting one of great regard
In Court, to compasse any sute not hard;
In case his paines were recompenc't with reason:
So would he worke the filly man by treason
To buy his Masters frivulous good will,
That had not power to do him good or ill,
So pittifull a thing is Suters state.

Most miserable man, whom wicked fate
Hath brought to Court, to sue for had-ywift,
That few haue found, and many one hath mist;
Full little knowest thou that hast not tride,
What hell it is, in suing long to bide:
To lose good dayes that might be better spent;
To waste long nights in peniue discontent:
To speed to day, to be put back to morrow;
To feed on hope, to pine with feare and sorrow;
To haue thy Princes grace, yet want her Peeres;
To haue thy asking, yet waite many yeeres;
To fret thy soule with crosses and with cares;
To eate thy heart through comfortlesse despair;
To fawne, to crouch, to wait, to ride, to runne;
To spend, to giue, to want, to be vdonne.
Vnhappy wight, borne to disastrous end,
That doth his life in so long tendance spend.
Who euer leaues sweet home, where meane estate
In safe assurance, without strife or hate,
Finds all things needfull for contentment meeke;
And will to Court for shadowes vaine to seeke,
Or hope to gaine, himselfe a daw will cry:
That curse God send vato mine enemie.
For none but such as this bold Ape vnble,
Can euer thrue in that vn lucky quest;
Or such as hath a Reynold to his man,
That by his shifts his Master furnish can.

But yet this Foxe could not so closely hide
His crafty feates, but that they were descride
At length, by such as fare in iustice seat,
Who for the same him fouly did entreat;
And hauing worthily him punished,
Out of the Court for euer banished,
And now the Ape waiting his huckster man,
That wont provide his necessities, gan
To grow into great lack, he could vp-holde
His countenance in those his garments olde;
Ne new ones could he easily provide,
Though all men him vncaled gan deride,
Like as a Puppet placed in a play,
Whose part once past, all men bid take away:
So that he driuen was to great distresse,
And shortly brought to hopelesse wretchednesse.
Then closely as he might, he cast to leaue
The Court, not asking any Pas or leaue;
But ran away in his reentrags by night,
Ne euer stayd in place, ne spake to wight,
Till that the Foxe his copelinate he had foun,
To whom complaying his vnhappy bound,

At last againe with him in trauell ioynd,
And with him far'd some better chance to finde.
So in the world long time they wandered,
And mickle want and hardnesse suffered;
That them repented much so foolishly
To come so farre to seeke for misery,
And leaue the sweetnes of contented home,
Though eating hips, and drinking watry some.

Thus as they them complained to and fro,
Whil'ft through the forest rechelesse they did goe,
Lo where they spide, how in a gloomy glade,
The Lion sleeping lay in secret shade,
His Crowne and Scepter lying him beside,
And hauing doft for hear his dreadfull hide:
Which when they sawe, the Ape was sore afraid,
And would haue fled with terror all dismaide.
But him the Foxe with hardy words did stay,
And bad him put all cowardize away:
For now was time (if euer they would hope)
To ayme their counsels to the fairest scope,
And them for euer highly to aduance,
In case the good which their owne happy chance
Them freely offred, they would wisely take.

Scarce could the Ape yet speake, so did he quake,
Yet as he could, he askt how good might growe,
Where nought but dread and death do seeme in thowe.

Now (said he) whiles the Lion sleepeeth found,
May we his Crowne and Mace take from the ground,
And eke his skinn, the terror of the wood,
Where-with we may our selues (if we thinke good)
Make Kings of beasts, and Lords of forests all,
Subiect vnto that power imperiall.

Ah! but (said the Ape) who is so bold a wretch,
That dare his hardy hand to those out-stretch;
When as he knowes his meed, if he be spide,
To be a thousand deaths, and shame beside?

Fond Ape (said then the Foxe) into whose brest
Neuer crept thought of honour, nor braue gest,
Who will not venture life a King to be,
And rather rule and raigne in Soueraigne see,
Than dwell in dust inglorious and bace,
Where none shall name the number of his place?
One ioyous houre in blisfull happinesse,
I chuse before a life of wretchednesse.
Be therefore counselled herein by me,
And shake off this vile-hearted cowardree.
If he awake, yet is not death the next,
For we may coulor it with some pretext
Of this, or that, that may excuse the crime:
Else we may flye; thou to a tree mayst cline,
And I creepe vnder ground; both from his reach:
Therefore be rul'd to doe as I doe teach.

The Ape, that earst did nought but chill and quake,
Now gan some courage vnto him to take,
And was content to attempt that enterprife,
Tickled with glory and rash couetise;
But first gan question whether should assay
Those royall ornaments to steale away.

Mary that shall your selfe (quoth he thereto)
For ye be fine and nimble it to do;

Of all the beasts which in the forests be,
Is not a fitter for this turne than yee:
Therefore raine owne deare brother take good heart,
And euer thinke a kingdome is your part.

Loath was the Ape (though praised) to aduentre,
Yet faintly gan into his worke to enter,
Afraid of euery leafe that stir'd him by,
And euery stick that vnderneath did ly;
Vpon his tiptoes nicely he vp went,
For making noyse, and still his eare he lent
To euery sound, that vnder heauen blew,
Now went, now slept, now crept, now backward drew;
That it good sport had beene him to haue cyde;
Yet at the last (so well he him applyde,)
Through his fine handling, and his cleanly play,
He all those royall signes had stolne away,
And with the Foxes helpe them borne aside,
Into a secret corner vnespide.

Whither when as they came, they fell at words,
Whether of them should be the Lord of Lords:

For th' Ape was stryfe-full, and ambitious;
And the Foxe guilefull, and most couetous,
That neither pleased was, to haue the raine
Twixt them diuided into euen twaine,
But either (algates) would be Lords alone:
For Loue and Lordship bide no paragone.

I am most worthy (said the Ape) I shal I
For it did put my life in iopardy:
There-to I am in person and in stature
Most like a man, the Lord of euery creature;
So that it seemeth I was made to raigne,
And borne to be a kingly Soueraigne.

Nay (said the Foxe) Sir Ape you are astray:
For though to steale the Diademe away
Were the worke of your nimble hand, yet I
Did first deuise the plot by policie;
So that it wholly springeth from my wit:
For which also I claime my selfe more fit
Than you, to rule: for gouernment of state
Will without wisedome soone be ruinate.
And where you claime your selfe for outward shape
Most like a man, Man is not like an Ape
In his chiefe parts, that is, in wit and spirite;
But I therein most like to him doe merite
For my slye wyles and subtil craftinesse,
The title of the kingdome to possesse.
Nath'lesse (my brother) since we passed are
Vnto this poynt, we will appease our iarre,
And I with reason meet will rest content,
That ye shall haue both crowne and gouernment,
Vpon condition, that ye ruled bee
In all affaires, and counselled by me;
And that ye let none other euer drawe
Your minde from mee, but keepe this as a law:
And hereupon an oath vnto me plight.

The Ape was glad to end the strife so light,
And there-to swore: for who would not oft sweare,
And oft vnswear, a Diademe to beare?
Then freely vp those royall spoyles he tooke,
Yet at the Lions skin he inly quooke;

But it dissembled, and vpon his head
The Crowne, and on his backe the skin he did,
And the false Foxe him helped to array.
Then when he was all dight, he tooke his way
Into the Forrest, that he might be seene
Of the wilde beasts in his new glory sheene.
There the two first, whom he encountred, were
The Sheepe and th' Asse, who stricken both with feare
At sight of him, gan fast away to flye,
But vnto them the Foxe aloud did cry,
And in the Kings name bad them both to stay,
Vpon the paine that thereof follow may.
Hardly nath'lesse were they restrained so,
Till that the Foxe forth toward them did go,
And there dissuaded them from needlesse feare,
For that the King did fauour to them beare;
And therefore dreadlesse bad them come to Corte:
For no wilde beasts should doe them any torte
There or abroad, ne would his maiestie
Vse them but well, with gracious clemencie,
As whom he knew to him both fast and true;
So he perswaded them with homage due
Themselues to humble to the Ape prostrate,
Who gently to them bowing in his gate,
Receiued them with chearefull entertaine.

Thence, forth proceeding with his princely traine,
He shortly met the Tygre, and the Bore,
Which with the simple Camell ragd fore
In bitter words, seeking to take occasion,
Vpon his fleshy corps to make inuasion:
But soone as they this mock-King did espy,
Their troublous strife they stinted by and by,
Thinking indeed that it the Lion was.
He then to proue whether his power would passe
As currant, sent the Foxe to them straight way,
Commanding them their cause of strife bewray;
And if that wrong on either side there were,
That he should warne the wronger to appeare
The morrow next at Court, it to defend;
In the meane time vpon the King t' attend.

The subtile Foxe so well his message said,
That the proud beasts him readily obeyd:
Whereby th' Ape in wondrous stomack woxe,
Strongly encourag'd by the crafty Foxe;
That King indeed himselfe he shortly thought,
And all the beasts him feared as they ought:
And followed vnto his Palace hie,
Where taking Conge, each one by and by
Departed to his house in dreadfull awe,
Full of the feared sight which late they sawe.

The Ape thus seized of the Regall throne,
Etsi soones by counsell of the Foxe alone,
Gan to prouide for all things in assurance,
That so his rule might longer haue endurance.
First, to his Gate he pointed a strong gard,
That none might enter but with issue hard:
Then for the safegard of his personage,
He did appoint a warlike equipage
Offorraine beasts, not in the Forrest bred,
But part by land, and part by water fed;

For tyrannie is with strange ayde supported.
Then vnto him all monstrous beasts resorted
Bred of two kindes, as Griffons, Minotaures,
Crocodiles, Dragons, Beauers, and Centaures
With those himselfe he strengthened mightily,
That feare he neede no force of enemy.
Then gan he rule and tyrannize at will,
Like as the Foxe did guide his gracelesse skill,
And all wilde beasts made vassals of his pleasures,
And with their spoyle enlarg'd his priuate treasures.
No care of iustice, nor no rule of reason,
No temperance, nor no regard of season
Did thenceforth euer enter in his minde,
But crueltie, the signe of currish kinde,
And sleighfull pride, and wilfull arrogance;
Such followes those whom fortune doth aduance.

But the false Foxe most kindly plaid his part:
For, whatsoever mother wit, or arte
Could worke, he put in proofe: no practise flie,
No counterpoint of cunning policie,
No reach, no breach, that might him profit bring,
But he the same did to his purpose wring.
Nought suffered he the Ape to giue or grant,
But through his hand must passe the Fiant.
All offices, all Leases by him leapt,
And of them all what-so he likte, he kept.
Iustice he sold, iniustice for to buy,
And for to purchase for his progeny.
Ill might it prosper, that ill gotten was:
But so he got it, little did he passe.
He fed his cubs with fat of all the soyle,
And with the sweet of others sweating toyle;
He crammed them with crums of Benefices,
And filld their mowthes with meeds of malefices,
He cloathed them with all colours saue white,
And loaded them with Lordships and with might,
So much as they were able well to beare,
That with the weight their backs nigh broken were;
He chaffred Chayres in which Churchmen were set,
And breach of lawes to priuie ferme did let.
No statute so established might be,
Nor ordinance so needfull, but that he
Would violate, though not with violence,
Yet vnder colour of the confidence
The which the Ape repos'd in him alone,
And reckned him the kingdoms corper-stone.
And euer when he ought would bring to passe,
His long experience the platforme was:
And when he ought not pleasing would put by,
The clocke was care of christ, and husbandry,
For to encrease the common treasures store;
But his owne treasure he encreased more,
And lifted vp his lofty towres therby,
That they began to threat the neighbour sky;
The whiles the Princes Palaces fell fast
To ruine: (for what thing can euer last?)
And whilst the other Peeres for pouertie
Were forc't their auncient houses to let lie,
And their old Castles to the ground to fall,
Which their forefathers (famous ouer all)

Had founded for the Kingdoms ornament,
 And for their memories long monument.
 But he no count made of Nobilitie,
 Nor the wilde beasts whom armes did glorifie,
 The Realmes chiefe strength and girdle of the Crowne;
 All these through fained crimes he thrust adowne,
 Or made them dwell in darknes of disgrace:
 For none, but whom he list might come in place.
 Of men of armes he had but small regard,
 But kept them lowe, and streightned very hard:
 For men of learning little he esteemed;
 His wisdom he aboue their learning deemed.
 As for the rascall Commons least he cared;
 For not so common was his bounty shared;
 Let God (said he) if please, care for the many,
 I for my selfe must care before else any:
 So did he good to none, to many ill,
 So did he all the kingdome rob and pill,
 Yet none durst speake, nor none durst of him plaine;
 So great he was in grace, and rich through gaine.
 Ne would he any let to haue access
 Vnto the Prince, but by his owne addresse:
 For all that else did come, were sure to faile,
 Yet would he further none but for auaille.
 For, on a time the Sheepe, to whom of yore
 The Foxe had promised of friendship store,
 What time the Ape the kingdome first did gaine,
 Came to the Court, her case there to complaine,
 How that the Wolfe her mortall enemye
 Had sithence slaine her Lambe most cruelly;
 And therefore crau'd to come vnto the King,
 To let him know the order of the thing.
 Soft gooddy Sheepe (then said the Foxe) not so:
 Vnto the King so rash ye may not goe,
 He is with greater mistere busied,
 Then a Lamb, or the Lambs owne mothers hed,
 Ne certes may I take it well in part,
 That ye my cousin Wolfe so fouly thwart,
 And seeke with slander his good name to blot:
 For there was cause, else doe it he would not.
 Therefore surcease good Dame, and hence depart.
 So went the Sheepe away with heauie heart,
 So many moe, so euery one was vsed,
 That to giue largely to the boxe refused.
 Now when high Ioue, in whose almighty hand
 The care of Kings, and power of Empires stand,
 Sitting one day within his turret hie,
 From whence he viewes with his black-lidded eye,
 What-so the heauen in his wide vawte containes,
 And all that in the deepest earth remaines,
 And troubled kingdome of wilde beasts beheld,
 Whom not their kindly Soueraigne did weld,
 But an vsurping Ape with guile suborn'd,
 Had all subiects, he disdainfully it scorn'd,
 In his great hart, and hardly did reframe,
 But that with thunder-bolts he had him slaine,
 And driuen down to hell, his dewest meed:
 But him auizing, he that dreadfull deed
 Forbore, and rather chose with scornfull shame
 Him to auenge, and blot his brutish name

Vnto the world, that neuer after any
 Should of his race be voyd of infamy:
 And his false counsellor, the cause of all,
 To damne to death, or dole perpetuall,
 From whence he neuer should be quit, not stali'd.
 Forth-with he *Mercurie* vnto him call'd,
 And bad him flie with neuer-resting speed
 Vnto the Forrest, where wilde beasts doe breed,
 And there enquiring priuily, to learne,
 What did of late chance to the Lion stearne,
 That he rul'd not the Empire, as he ought;
 And whence were all those plaints vnto him brought
 Of wrongs and spoiles, by saluage beasts committed;
 Which done he bad the Lion be remitted
 Into his feat, and those same treachours vile
 Be punished for their presumptuous guile.
 The sonne of *Maia* soone as he receiue'd
 The word, straight with his azure wings he cleau'd
 The liquid clowdes, and lucid firmament;
 Ne staid, till that he came with steepe descent
 Vnto the place, where his prescript did shoue.
 There stouping like an arrowe from a bowe,
 He soft arriued on the grassie Plaine,
 And fairely passed forth with easie paine;
 Till that vnto the Palace nigh he came.
 Then gau hee to himselfe new shape to frame,
 And that faire face, and that Ambrosiall hew
 Which wons to decke the Gods immortal crew,
 And beautifie the stately firmament,
 He doft, vnfit for that rude rabblement.
 So standing by the gates in strange disguise;
 He gan enquire of some in secret wize,
 Both of the King and of his gouernment,
 And of the Foxe, and his false blandishment:
 And euermore he heard each one complaine
 Of foule abuses both in realme and raigne.
 Which yet to proue more true, he meant to see,
 And an eye-witnes of each thing to bee.
 Tho, on his head his dreadfull hat he dight,
 Which maketh him inuisible in fight,
 And mocketh th'eyes of all the lookers on,
 Making them thinke it but a vision. (swords;
 Through power of that, he runnes through enemies
 Through power of that, he passeth through the herds
 Of rauinous wilde beasts, and doth beguile
 Their greedie mouthes of the expected spoiles;
 Through power of that, his cunning thecueries
 He wons to worke, that none the same espies;
 And through the power of that, he putteth on,
 What shape he list in apparition.
 That on his head he wore: and in his hand
 He tooke *Caduceus* his snakie wand,
 With which the damned ghosts he gouerneth;
 And furies rules, and Tartare tempereth.
 With that he causeth sleepe to seize the eyes,
 And fear the harts of all his enemies;
 And when he list, an vniuersall night
 Throughout the world he makes on euery wight
 As when his Sire with *Alcumena* lay.
 Thus dight, into the Court he tooke his way,

Body

Both through the gard, which neuer him deseride,
 And through the watch-men, who him neuer spide:
 Thence, forth he past into each secret part,
 Where-as he saw (that sorely grieu'd his heart)
 Each place abounding with foule iniuries,
 And filld with treasure rackt with robberies:
 Each place defilde with blood of guiltlesse beasts,
 Which had bene slaine to serue the Apes bechests;
 Gluttony, malice, pride, and couetize,
 And lawlesnes reigning with riotize;
 Besides the infinite extortions,
 Done through the Foxes great oppressions,
 That the complaints thereof could not be tolde,
 Which when he did with lothfull eyes behold,
 He would no more endure, but came his way,
 And cast to seeke the Lion where he may,
 That he might worke the auengement for this shame,
 On those two caytiues, which had bred him blame.
 And seeking all the Forrest busily,
 At last he found, where sleeping he did ly:
 The wicked weed, which there the Foxe did lay,
 From underneath his head he tooke away,
 And then him waking, forced vp to rize.
 The Lion looking vp, gan him auize,
 As one late in a trauance, what had of long
 Become of him: for fantasie is strong.
 Arise (said *Mercurie*) thou sluggish beast,
 That heere liest senslesse, like the corpe decaist,
 The whil'st thy kingdome from thy head is rent,
 And thy throne royall with dishonor blent:
 Arise, and doe thy selfe redeeme from shame,
 And be aueng'd on those that breed thy blame.
 There-at enraged, soone he gan vp-start,
 Grinding his teeth, and grating his great heart,
 And rousing vp himselfe, for his rough hide
 He gan to reach; but no where it elpide.
 There-with he gan full terribly to rore,
 And chauf at that indignity right fore.
 But when his Crowne and Scepter both he wanted
 Lord how he fum'd, and sweld, and rag'd, and panted;
 And threatned death, and thousand deadly dolours
 To them that had purloyn'd his Princely honours!
 With that in haste, disroabed as he was,
 He toward his owne Palace forth did passe;

And all the way he roared as he went,
 That all the Forrest with astonishment
 Thereof did tremble, and the beasts therein
 Fled fast away from that so dreadfull din.
 At last, he came vnto his mansion,
 Where all the gates he found fast lockt anon,
 And many warders round about them stood.
 With that he roar'd aloud, as he were wood,
 That all the Palace quaked at the sound,
 As if it quite were riuen from the ground,
 And all within were dead and hartlesse left;
 And th'Ape himselfe, as one whose wits were rest,
 Fled heere and there, and euery corner sought,
 To hide himselfe from his owne feared thought.
 But the false Foxe, when he the Lion heard,
 Fled closely forth, straight-way of death afraid,
 And to the Lion came full lowly creeping,
 With fained face, and watry eyne halfe weeping,
 To excuse his former treason and abusion,
 And turning all vnto the Apes confusion:
 Nath'lesse, the royall Beast for bore beleueing,
 But bad him stay at ease till further preueing.
 Then when he saw no entrance to him graunted,
 Roaring yet lowder that all harts it daunted,
 Vpon those gates with force he fiercely flew,
 And rending them in peeces, felly flew
 Those warders strange, and all that else he met.
 But th'Ape still flying, he no where might get:
 From rouse to rouse, from beame to beame he fled
 All breathlesse, and for feare now almost ded:
 Yet him at last the Lion spide and caught,
 And forth with shame vnto his iudgement brought.
 Then all the beasts he caus'd assembled be,
 To heare their doome, and sad ensample see.
 The Foxe, first Author of that treacherie,
 He did vncape, and then abroad let flie.
 But th'Apes long taile (which then he had) he quight
 Cut off, and both eares pared of their height;
 Since which, all Apes but halfe the ir eares haue left,
 And of their tiales are vterly bereft.
 So Mother *Hubberd* her discourse did end:
 Which pardon me, if I a misse haue pend;
 For, weake was my remembrance it to hold,
 And bad her tongue that it so bluntly told.

FINIS.



